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U.S. Dept. of Commerce - NOAA
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Agricultural News: The month of March brought warmer temperatures as winter came to an end. Drier conditions have helped the progress of field work and new grass growth. Farming activities for the month included applying manure and fertilizers, soil sampling, machinery repairs, and planning for the upcoming crop plantings.

CROP and LIVESTOCK CONDITIONS for week ending 03/27/16

Crop	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
	%	%	%	%	%
Barley	-	1	19	73	7
Oats	-	-	36	56	8
Winter wheat	-	1	23	66	10
Pasture	4	18	33	37	8
Livestock	2	10	22	55	11

-Represents zero.

Forage Percent Obtained from Pastures	This Month	Last Year	5-Yr Avg
	%	%	%
Feed Obtained from Pastures	31	-	-

- Represents data not available or zero.

Weather Summary- For the week ending March 27, 2016

City	Temperature						Growing degree days (modified base 50)		Precipitation				
	Avg. max.	Avg. min.	High max.	Low min.	Avg.	Avg. dep. from normal *	Mar. 1 to Mar. 26	Mar. 1 to Mar. 26 norm	Last Week	Since Mar. 1	Mar. 1 dep. from normal *	Jan. 1 to date	Jan. 1 dep. from normal *
Lynchburg	63	39	76	31	51	3	207	113	0.06	2.46	-0.73	9.75	-0.09
Norfolk	66	46	82	34	56	6	233	128	0.49	2.20	-1.18	13.07	2.36
Richmond	65	40	78	29	53	4	214	138	0.11	0.81	-2.56	8.46	-1.49
Roanoke	64	42	78	36	53	4	227	NA	0.01	1.87	-1.29	10.10	0.58
Wash/Dulles	63	38	77	26	50	5	187	NA	0.00	1.03	-1.91	9.28	0.53

* Normal based on 1971-2000 data. NA-Not available. Source: NCEP/NOAA Climate Prediction Center <http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov>. Source: USDA, NASS, Virginia Field Office.

REPORTER COMMENTS BY COUNTY – Comments are based on remarks made by extension agents, farmers, commodity specialists, and other knowledgeable individuals.

NORTHERN

FAIRFAX (Adria Bordas)
It has been unseasonable warm these past few weeks, not much rain.

ROCKINGHAM (Doug Horn)
Unusual warm spell the second week of March. Soil dried down enough to allow manure and fertilizer applications to small grains.

WESTERN

HIGHLAND (Rodney Leech)

Maple production over for 2016 with yields below normal.

CENTRAL

AMELIA (Laura Siegle)

We are seeing considerable spring green up of pastures and new grass growth.

EASTERN

ESSEX (Keith Balderson)

Dry conditions have allowed farmers to make excellent progress with field work, including topdressing wheat and applying herbicides, lime, and fertilizer for the upcoming corn crop. Farmers have also been deep ripping fields with compaction concerns. The small grain crop is about 10-14 days ahead of schedule due to the warm conditions. Pastures are greening up and should start significant spring growth in the near future.

GLOUCESTER (David Moore)

Conditions are drying out quickly. Farm activities include soil sampling, nitrogen applications on small grains, lime applications, deep tillage and other field prep for corn, seed delivery, and machinery repair. Folks are cautiously proceeding with field work. Some greenhouse planting has begun. Strawberries are in bloom. For the most part, missed significant damage from this week's cold snap.

NORTHAMPTON (Ursula Deitch)

There has been a lot of disease found on wheat and barley recently. The weather has been conducive to disease with the continued rains.

SOUTHWESTERN

GRAYSON (Kevin Spurlin)

Unseasonably mild winter and recent warmth in March is leading to early green-up of pasture and hay land. There is starting to be forage available on fields with no livestock presence through the winter.

SCOTT (Scott Jerrell)

Dry weather has impacted spring green up of grass. Freezing temps early this week had strawberry growers overhead irrigating. Still looks like end of April picking.

SOUTHERN

FRANKLIN (Chris Brown)

Farms in Franklin County are experiencing a break in some moisture. Winter annual forages are being top-dressed and seem to be growing well. Farmers are gearing up to plant corn in the coming weeks. Livestock are enjoying the young tender growth of cool season pastures awakening. Early fruit trees have bloomed and most all have budded.

SOUTHEASTERN

BRUNSWICK (Cynthia Gregg)

It has been raining regularly. Some crop fields have drowned spots starting to show up. Grass is greening up. Lime and fertilizer trucks are on the roads spreading for producers. Producers are scouting small grains as well.

PRINCE GEORGE (Scott Reiter)

Recent activities have included applying fertilizer and lime in preparation for planting season. Some wheat has received the last nitrogen application for this year and the rest will likely occur in the next week. Producers are preparing equipment and gathering inputs to start the corn planting season. No corn has been planted yet as growers are waiting on a passing rain system and soil temperatures to warm a bit.

VIRGINIA BEACH CITY (Roy D. Flanagan)

With the fairly short lived winter, it looks like on average our strawberry crop is running about 1.5 - 2 weeks ahead of a normal schedule. On the most advanced crop, we already have sizable fruits that are beginning to show some color with the bulk of the acreage being 20 - 25 days out from picking.